



**2024 PRPS Conference & Expo**  
**Educational Sessions**  
**March 12 – March 15, 2024**  
**Seven Springs Mountain Resort**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 12**

**1:00 – 2:15 pm**

**Healthy Communities, Parks and Splashpads**

With this presentation, we're exploring effective community infrastructure through the lens of aquatic play. We'll discover how Splashpads increase park usage, promote inclusion and build social capital that help communities grow and flourish.

*Speaker: Barb Lapierre, Regional Sales Manager - Vortex Aquatic Structures International*

**Active Transportation = Recreation for All**

This session will introduce Active Transportation and how it can help all residents have 'close to home' recreation. We'll review the stacked health benefits of Active Transportation and look at ways to evaluate pedestrian and bicycle access to your community's recreation assets. Through examples, we'll discuss how to incorporate simple active transportation improvements that can immediately enhance access to your recreation network. We'll also introduce how DCNR is incorporating walking or rolling access into recreation and conservation planning. We'll end with how your community can use Active Transportation planning to advance larger projects that will ensure Recreation for All.

*Speakers: Cheri Matter, Section Chief - PA DCNR; Trish Newdeck - Recreation & Conservation Advisor, PA DCNR*

**REC-ognition: Acknowledging the Importance of Parks and Recreation**

Over the past few years Parks and Recreation has inched closer to becoming an essential service. There's no doubt that funding for Parks and Recreation is available in times of surplus, but is often the first service cut when times are tough. This session will provide some tips, tricks and insight to help position your agency as essential moving forward.

*Speaker: Bill Salvatore, Deputy Commissioner, Program Division - Philadelphia Parks & Recreation*

**Meeting Communities Where They Are, One Breath at a Time**

According to the interwebs, and people who talk about this sort of thing, Community Wellbeing is defined as: "The combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities." Oftentimes in Parks and Recreation, especially urban settings where leaders may be moved from site to site, we fail to meet communities where they are, and instead attempt to impose on them our skillsets and wheelhouses. This presentation will discuss the role of the public servant, alternative routes to community engagement, and how mindfulness practices can link leaders in their communities. Participants will be taught mindfulness techniques to take back to their communities and should come prepared to move and do some yoga!

*Speakers: Natalie Felix DiDonato, Recreation Leader - Philadelphia Parks & Recreation; Kelly Fassano, Recreation Leader - Philadelphia Parks & Recreation*

### **Graphic Design for Non Graphic Designers**

You do not need to be a graphic designer to create visually compelling communication materials. In this hands-on session, you will learn how to use Canva to enhance your flyers, social media graphics, and other publicity items. Bringing a fully charged device (laptop preferred, but a smartphone or tablet will work) is recommended so you can follow along.

*Speaker: Derek Muller, Public Information Officer - Montgomery Township*

### **Trends in Play Space Design: Activity, Engagement, Involvement**

Parks today face the challenge of providing environments that will attract children and families to engage, play and stay. To compete with indoor, more sedentary activities. In this session, we will examine playground trends that create kid magnets, that facilitate multi-generational interaction, or signature playgrounds that tell a community story.

*Speaker: Michael Fingerth, Regional Manager - Landscape Structures, Inc.*

## **TUESDAY, MARCH 12**

**2:30 pm - 3:45 pm**

### **Energy is Everything and Everything is Energy!**

Join us for some yoga or dancing in this interactive session, combining movement and art. Participants can engage if they want to but not mandatory.

*Speakers: Alberta Gibson, Recreation Leader 2 Supervisor - Philadelphia Parks & Recreation; Carmen Butler, Professional Dance Instructor and Choreographer - Philadelphia Parks & Recreation*

### **MyRec.com Recreation Software User Group**

MyRec.com User Group Session: Software that Simplifies your Recreation Management This session for current MyRec.com users will cover all features of the software including important updates since we last met. We will highlight our newest features, demonstrate how you could and should use the system while giving you tips and tricks to make your life easier. There will be a question/answer period for all involved. Let's share how you simplify your recreation management!

*Speaker: Colin Drury, Chief Commercial Officer - MyRec.com Recreation Software*

### **Leadership is an Action Word**

Leadership is truly an action word. As leaders we often lose sight of this. This session will encourage all leaders, rookies or veterans, to leave their comfort zone to become better leaders and to raise the level of their team.

*Speaker: Bill Salvatore, Deputy Commissioner, Program Division - Philadelphia Parks & Recreation*

### **Fostering Growth in Community Recreation Programs Through Positive Relationships and Partnerships**

Fostering growth in community recreation programs hinges on cultivating positive relationships and partnerships. By collaborating with partners, local organizations, schools, and businesses, these programs can access additional resources, expertise, and funding. Constructive connections not only expand program reach but also enrich participant experiences. Shared goals and mutual support build a sense of belonging, encouraging active involvement and sustained community engagement. Through the power of positive relationships and strategic partnerships, community recreation programs can flourish, offering diverse and meaningful opportunities for all.

*Speaker: Jack Bingeman, Director of Recreation - Lancaster Recreation Commission*

### **Innovation is Invitation: Defining What's Next in Inclusive Play**

As communities go beyond minimum ADA design standards for play spaces, we begin to look at "what's next" in inclusive design, and integrating current thought and language around disability. We will cover best design practices to create play for those with ADHD and Dyslexia, Blind/Low Vision, Deaf/Hard of

Hearing, and more.

*Speaker: Jill Moore, Inclusive Play Specialist - Landscape Structures*

### **Barriers to Waterway Access**

Access to water-based outdoor recreation is essential for all citizens. An increasingly diverse population is looking for space to cool off in the face of severe summer heat brought on by climate change. Furthermore, polls indicate more people are interested in trying kayaking and canoeing than ever before. Yet there are many barriers that make recreating in local waters challenging for many residents and visitors, from tangible physical and financial difficulties to more subtle social and emotional obstacles. How can we, as government agencies, recreation professionals, and local interest groups, support water-based recreation opportunities on our natural waterways? We will review Pennsylvania's efforts to strategically expand public access to water (fishing, boating, and splashing), fund new access facilities, promote waterways for recreation, offer programming for new users, and address structural racism to provide outdoor recreation options that are welcoming to all.

*Speaker: Vallie Edenbo, Rivers Program Specialist - PA DCNR; Trish Newdeck, Recreation & Conservation Advisor - PA DCNR*

## **TUESDAY, MARCH 12**

**6:30 PM**

### **Keynote: Rare Magic**

Drew Murray is a speaker, magician and entrepreneur from Columbus, Ohio. He presents at several hundred events each year both nationally and internationally for groups such as Amazon, Facebook, Nationwide Insurance and The FBI.

His residency show, "Rare Magic" sells out months in advance at Autograph Collection Hotels across the country. Through the concept of time he reminds audiences that the most remarkable journeys often begin with a single moment of wonder. Join us as Drew gives a behind the scenes look at how we can use techniques of a magician to create true magic for those around us.

*Speaker: Drew Murray - Magician and Speaker Extraordinaire*

## **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13**

**8:30 - 9:45 am**

### **Everything You Were Too Afraid to Ask About Park Operations**

Whether you are new to parks, if you're in programming, planning, or just want to know more about how the magic happens, join for an in-depth session about Park Operations. We will discuss the skills, abilities, and personal characteristics it takes to be successful within park operations. We will explore industry specific topics, knowledge, and responsibilities within park operations management, supervisory roles, and how to develop them even if you have had no previous contact or experience. Specific examples and real-life career development situations will be shared by an experienced professional who serves in park operation management and who will provide perspective for staff who wish to transition to park operations. This will be an interactive session so bring your questions!

*Speaker: Gary Schussler, Parks Superintendent - City of Kettering*

### **USTA Tennis Venue Services**

The USTA's Tennis Venue Services Team offers FREE Park Assessments. We will discuss the 4 assessment modules: Management, Impact, Programming, and Infrastructure and examine how the USTA can help you bring tennis to your community. Learn how to identify community partners and build strong partnerships between schools, Community Tennis Associations and the public parks! USTA can help you

bring tennis to your community.

*Speaker: Renee Lentz, Director of Community Development - USTA Middle States*

### **Hop, Skip, Play: Accessible Play at Splash Pads**

Creating accessible play value at splash pads can inspire different types of play. Collaborative social play, imaginative play, and risky play (the good kind!) can foster positive memories and associations with aquatics to encourage lifelong fun and learning. In this session, attendees will explore the 8 developmental stages important for human development and growth, learn about zoning splash pads to tailor play to these groups, and discover how they can apply these concepts to their own community splash pad.

*Speaker: MaryAnn Eifert, Regional Account Executive - Life Floor*

### **Conservation Actions for Climate Resiliency in State Parks**

Conservation through the creation of resilient and climate ready landscapes is an important role for today's park and recreation professional. It requires more than simply protecting natural lands from development. This session will provide an overview of climate resiliency projects and practices that are being implemented within state parks to show how these projects can be made possible at the landscape scale with examples you can visit right here in the Laurel Highlands.

*Speaker: Nick Decker, CPRP, Natural Resource Program Supervisor - DCNR*

### **Identifying your Town's Heart & Soul**

Learn to use Community Heart & Soul tools to engage more residents - including 'unheard community voices'. Experience how storytelling can reveal what matters most to residents and shift your town's narrative from problems to possibilities. You'll learn to extract data from stories that aids in master planning and is useful for grant writing. By better engaging the diversity of your town you will help build trust, consensus, and local capacity - and may even increase volunteerism and collaboration.

*Speaker: Alice Trowbridge, Registered Landscape Architect - Community Heart & Soul*

### **99 Problems...and Pickleball isn't one of Them**

Parks and recreation professionals are challenged on an almost hourly basis to solve problems for the benefit of the community. These problems may range from how to provide services to an underserved community (without any additional resources) to developing a plan for implementing a new park design. All of these "problems" present challenges to the professional. Using problem solving techniques and creativity will allow the professional to develop solutions on behalf of their community. This session will detail problem solving techniques and how to implement this process in their daily workflow.

*Speaker: Chris Nunes, Chief Operating Officer - The Woodlands Township*

## **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13**

**2:30 - 3:45 pm**

### **Aquatics Roundtable**

Join Lauren Fry and Owen Long with the American Red Cross Training Services for an aquatics roundtable. All things aquatics from staffing, training, and operations will be discussed with plenty of time to ask questions about the R24 American Red Cross Lifeguarding Curriculum that was released in Feb. 2024.

*Speakers: Lauren Fry, First Responder Training Specialist - American Red Cross; Owen Long, Licensed Training Specialist - American Red Cross*

### **Well-Being, Naturally Part 1**

Rediscover three proven tools for enhancing your personal well-being and integrating them into your professional life. This skill set is vital for addressing post-COVID-19 challenges, including escalating rates

of anxiety, depression, and traumatic stress. Loneliness, equated to 15 cigarettes' impact, contributes to heart disease and cognitive decline, magnifying community and economic repercussions for the next decade plus. Amid this emerging public health crisis, Parks and Recreation Departments, and their staff, play a crucial role in community well-being, standing at the forefront of intervention.

*Speakers: Connor Moriarty, Founder/Director - Reset Outdoors; Emily Moriarty, Clinical Director - Reset Outdoors*

### **The Benefits of a Model Safety Culture**

In this session we will discuss how a loss prevention program will benefit any industry while highlighting issues that are specific to nonprofits, human services, and sports & recreation organizations. Learners will be provided best safety practices for employees, volunteers and customers. Examples of tools for managing safety and general liability will be reviewed.

The objectives for this session are:

1. Comprehend how loss prevention efforts impact insurance premiums and the difference between direct and indirect costs of an insurance claim
2. Conduct a thorough risk assessment to identify areas of focus for risk mitigation
3. Develop strategies for eliminating or managing risks specific to your operations

*Speaker: Andrea Doebler CSP, Risk Management Technical & Training Specialist - Secura*

### **Lessons Learned In Planning, Financing And Construction Of Parks & Recreation Facilities**

This session is a complete planning resource for those considering renovated, new or expanded municipal facilities, such as Community Centers, Youth Centers, Recreation Facilities and Parks. The program will include comprehensive studies ranging from early needs assessments, planning, design, financing, bidding and construction issues, and will be demonstrated through examples of completed projects throughout the state including South Fayette Township, Bethlehem Township and Derry Township, among others.

*Speakers: Martin Kimmel, President - Kimmel Bogrette Architecture + Site; Paula Willis, Parks and Recreation Director - South Fayette Township*

### **Build a Better Mousetrap: Program Marketing, Pricing and Evaluation**

Are you tired of struggling to attract participants to your recreation programs? Do you want to maximize the success of your offerings and ensure they are priced appropriately? Do you know if you have a good evaluation process? Join us for an engaging session that will revolutionize your recreation program management. In this session, we will dive into the key elements of marketing, pricing, and evaluation strategies that will help you build a better mousetrap for your recreation programs. Whether you are a recreation professional, program coordinator, or administrator, this session is designed to equip you with the knowledge and tools to elevate your recreation programs to new heights

*Speaker: Chris Nunes, Chief Operating Officer - The Woodlands Township*

### **Hiring and Retention - How Can Leaders Make a Difference**

Leaders play a key role in hiring the right people and maintaining a quality workforce that meets or exceeds the desired performance standards. This workshop will address simple action steps leaders can take to develop a cohesive team and create a workplace culture that fosters success, trust and longevity.

*Speaker: Linda Falcone, Extension Educator - Penn State*

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13**

**4:00 - 5:15 pm**

**SCORP 2025-2029 Community Providers Input Session**

Come join DCNR Staff to provide input and feedback towards the next Statewide Comprehensive

Outdoor Recreation Plan. We will go over past priorities and action items to gain feedback on the next priorities and action items to consider. We need your input to help shape this plan for local park and recreation departments seeking grant funding.

*Speaker: Alex MacDonald, Section Chief of Trails, Greenways and Statewide Planning - DCNR*

### **Well-Being, Naturally Part 2**

Rediscover three proven tools for enhancing your personal well-being and integrating them into your professional life. This skill set is vital for addressing post-COVID-19 challenges, including escalating rates of anxiety, depression, and traumatic stress. Loneliness, equated to 15 cigarettes' impact, contributes to heart disease and cognitive decline, magnifying community and economic repercussions for the next decade plus. Amid this emerging public health crisis, Parks and Recreation Departments, and their staff, play a crucial role in community well-being, standing at the forefront of intervention.

*Speakers: Connor Moriarty, Founder/Director - Reset Outdoors; Emily Moriarty, Clinical Director - Reset Outdoors*

### **Winning Language, Winning Action, Winning Culture**

Have you ever wondered what 'Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast' really means? We'll break it down for you in this session. We will discuss the components that make up cultures, encourage participants to put their own culture under a microscope to truly assess each component, and identify where and how to start changing or improving departmental culture. We will provide examples of tools for surveying staff, discuss critical conversations that need to occur within leadership teams and staff, and highlight the importance of rewarding of what you want repeated in your culture.

*Speaker: Myla Neal, Assistant Director - Loudoun County VA Parks, Recreation & Community Services; Ramier Martin, Assistant Director - Loudoun County VA Parks, Recreation & Community Services*

### **Myth into Mandatory- Climate Change in the Parks**

Political, scientific or opinion- climate change is more than a headline and initiatives are in place. New legislation is being introduced accordingly and regulation will follow. How will parks in PA be impacted? As a DEP licensed facility we have witnessed 30 years of process for vegetative waste evolve. Unraveling the codes and costs of these new standards will be imperative for successfully managing the properties within your park district.

*Speaker: Kimberly Frost, Public Sector Director - Britton Industries*

### **Great Expectations: Can Revenue Goals and Social Equity Co-Exist**

The roots of the Recreation Profession lie in the Playground Movement of the 1880's. We were a social service created to keep children safe, but today we are asked to be a service that recovers its cost- can both of these co-exist??? In this session, will review how to identify and address community need, address cost recovery goals and meet the mandate for equity in services. These two mandates can co-exist if a relevant service is provided based on planning, market segmentation, competition analysis and financial performance monitoring.

*Speaker: Chris Nunes, Chief Operating Officer - The Woodlands Township*

### **Inclusion Matters: Whole Child, Whole Environment, Whole Community**

By thoughtfully breaking down both physical and social barriers in park destinations, people of all ages and abilities can enjoy the lifelong developmental benefits of play and recreation. Research collected at hundreds of playgrounds demonstrates the positive impact inclusive play has on community health and strengthens the case to potential funders and stakeholders. Explore evidence-based design best practices that address the physical, social-emotional, cognitive, sensory, and communicative needs of all park visitors- creating a welcoming atmosphere and deeper sense of belonging.

*Speaker: Jennie Sumrell, Community Outreach Director - PlayCore*

**THURSDAY, MARCH 14**

**8:30 - 9:45 am**

**Establishing an Emergency Action Plan for Your Summer Camp**

Is there such a thing as too safe? When it comes to the wellbeing of the children of your community, the answer is no! We'll discuss all the factors to consider when creating or updating an Emergency Action Plan for your summer camp including medical and weather emergencies, accidents, site security, and more, as well as a unique, tried and true method for camper head counts.

*Speaker: Amanda Pozzuto, Recreation Supervisor - Township of Upper St. Clair*

**Recreation Facilities Construction in a Volatile Economic Environment**

Infrastructure funding and inflation are driving a volatile economic environment that presents both opportunities and challenges for park and recreation facility construction, whether development or renovation. Presenters will share lessons learned while navigating the conflicting requirements and timelines of the grant funding process, COSTARS and cooperative purchasing, permitting, competitive public bidding, and construction scheduling. Tips from multiple post-Covid projects will help recreation departments "thread the needle" and successfully complete their facilities project.

*Speakers: Chris Sarson, Land Planner - Herbert, Rowland & Grubic; Devin Dunwoody, Project Manager - Herbert, Rowland & Grubic*

**Developing Aquatics Programming That Fits the Needs of Your Community**

This information session will focus on using a customer-based approach to guide decision making in Aquatics programming. The session will cover the importance of using surveys, determinants tools, and identifying underserved populations.

*Speaker: Cat Adams, CPRP, CPO, LGIT, Aquatics Manager - Lower Makefield Township*

**Multimodal Trails & Placemaking – Case Studies & Ideas**

In this session, attendees will hear from trail designers on how multi-modal trails can serve a variety of functions to create accessible public amenities for all ages and abilities. A series of case studies will overview design approaches to multi-modal trails; accessibility; design of trailheads; site furnishings and other amenities; managing stormwater; preserving existing trees; planting along trails; public art opportunities; community engagement; and trail maintenance concerns. Both urban and suburban trail typologies will be considered and reviewed.

*Speakers: Michael Connor, Director of Philadelphia Operations - NV5; Rosa Mannion, Principal Landscape Architect - NV5*

**Creating an Alliance**

Creating networking groups in any field can be a challenge. Members of the Westmoreland County Park and Recreation Alliance will discuss the history of how the Alliance was formed, the changes it has seen over the past 20 years and how counties across the state can form their own Alliance to better assist each other and serve our communities.

*Speaker: Brandon Simpson, Director - Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation*

**Good for You! And PA too!**

The Good for You campaign has a new look, a new logo, a new approach, a new one-of-a-kind website! But it's still the same GOOD stuff you've come to know and love. We will learn about Good including the updated, easy-to-use Park Finder with helpful filters and an interactive map.

The Good for You mission is inspired by the belief that local parks and recreation improve the lives of Pennsylvanians. "Good for You." serves a statewide advocacy channel for the essential and irreplaceable nature of local parks & recreation in Pennsylvania's communities.

*Speakers: Emily Schnellbaugh, Director of Communications - PRPS; Niki Tourscher, Director of Training & IT - PRPS*

**THURSDAY, MARCH 14**

**10:00 - 11:15 am**

**Plan and Map Your Events Accurately**

This session will focus on tools, tips, and tricks when planning and mapping outdoor and indoor events. Learn how to use various features to accurately plan traffic management, staffing, crowd barriers, routes, and infrastructure, and measure out areas by using a simple, drag-and-drop inch-accurate software.

*Speakers: Devin McKinley, Business Development Manager - North America – OnePlan; Paula Willis, Parks and Recreation Director - South Fayette Township*

**Natural Resource Manager: Why Every Municipality Needs One**

Beyond planting a few trees and establishing a native plant garden, most municipal park maintenance is focused on instead athletic fields, playgrounds and mowing – not natural resource management. Learn how one community took an unconventional step in establishing a natural resource manager position in the suburbs and how that decision has triggered new stewardship efforts, community volunteerism, department initiatives and funding opportunities.

*Speakers: Derek Dureka, Parks & Recreation Director - Upper Dublin Parks & Recreation; Colleen Kenny, Natural Resource Manager - Upper Dublin Parks & Recreation*

**Parks, More Than Just Playgrounds**

Introduce users to recreational opportunities that they may not have considered in the past by incorporating a multigenerational park central to athletics and green and sustainable environments and connecting them all by our trails.

*Speaker: Andy Oles, Parks & Recreation Director - Warrington Township*

**Let's talk about the "SHIPS" to Make your Events Sail!**

Are you looking for ways to boost your programs or need extra money to make your event over the top? We will discuss creative ways using sponsorships and partnerships to do just that!

*Speakers: Josh Werner, Director of Parks and Recreation - Moon Township; Lauren Madison, Community Engagement Coordinator - Moon Township*

**CPRP/CPRE With Me**

So you're thinking about earning CPRP/CPRE but asking yourself why? In this session, the importance of the professional certifications will be summarized and attendees will be alerted to several ways the certifications can be leveraged for personal and organizational benefit. In addition, attendees will learn about some ways to use their experience and various study aids to get ready for and pass the CPRP/CPRE examinations. Dan will identify and share several study aids, tips, and materials to help them prepare for and pass the exam.

*Speaker: Dan Hendey, Education Manager - Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society*

**Rescue Ready – One agency's story of overcoming a severe lifeguard shortage.**

Learn how one agency went from not being able to open the seasonal aquatic facility to employing more lifeguards than ever before in the 56-year history of this public pool. The Rescue Ready program encompasses building relationships, thinking outside the box and investing in the next generation of first responders.

*Speaker: Tammy Agesen CPRE AFO, Program Manager - County of Lancaster Department of Parks & Recreation*



**THURSDAY, MARCH 14**

**1:30 - 2:45 pm**

**Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies Part 1: Everything you should know about Accreditation**

In the first session of a two-part series participants will learn about the benefits of NRPA's Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) from a Pennsylvania agency who has firsthand experience. CAPRA delivers quality assurance and improvement to accredited park and recreation organizations throughout the United States by helping them build a comprehensive management system of operational best practices. In this session presenters will talk about accreditation and its benefits.

*Speakers: Monica Tierney CPRE, Director of Parks and Recreation - Lower Makefield Township; Lynn Todd, Operations Manager - Lower Makefield Township; Jennifer Schleining, CAPRA Accreditation Senior Manager - NRPA*

**Youth Mentoring Programs, Frameworks, and Opportunities**

Mechanicsburg Area Parks and Recreation under the Direction of the previous Director, received NRPA's 2023 Out of School Time youth mentoring granting for \$50,000 over three years for program cost and development. The Youth Mentoring Framework has been developed to help local park and recreation agencies craft their own unique, individualized mentoring programs. It is designed to help your agency leverage local park and recreation assets that build protective factors around at-risk youth, while also forming strong social connections and positive relationships to address trauma, adversity and other challenges that youth experience. Attend this roundtable to speak about the successful programs you have developed for all ages of mentoring within your community, or come and listen to creative programming to enhance the diversity of the you already offer, and learn more about NRPA mentoring program opportunities.

*Speaker: Tonya Brown, Retired*

**Building Recreational Infrastructure through Environmental Restoration Projects**

This session will discuss leveraging environmental restoration funds to create recreational infrastructure. Funded federally and administered by DEP, the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) was recently made permanent after its pilot-program status. Eligible projects for the program have a component with justifiable economic impact, and in the examples to be provided in this session, that impact has been the construction of recreational infrastructure in the form of multiuse trails. The environmental reclamation of previously impaired land and water provides for additional environmental and recreational opportunities, such as wildlife viewing, hiking, fishing, boating, and more. Hear updates on two projects in Indiana County that will construct roughly 8 miles of trail while removing waste coal and restoring local water quality using a combination of AMLER and other funds in communities that previously depended on fossil fuel extraction for their local economies, and are now working to better position their local economies to capitalize on outdoor recreation and its supporting small businesses.

*Speakers: Adriene Smochek, Regional Advisor, Southwest Region - PA DCNR; Rob Nymick, Manager of Homer City Borough – Homer City; Shaun Busler, GIS Professional and Biologist – BioMost, Inc*

**Building Team Culture w/ Seasonal Staff**

Seasonal staff can provide great value to organizations with a varying workload but a drawback is often a lack of buy in from seasonal staff who know they will only be there for a short time. This presentation will cover ways of getting that buy in to build a staff culture that creates an environment that encourages teamwork and keeps all of your operations running like a well-oiled machine.

*Speaker: Cynthia Rabbers, Assistant Director for Campus Recreation - Penn State University - Stone Valley Recreation Area*

## **Leveraging Partnerships to Enhance Local Recreation**

When plans were underway to expand parking at the Sideling Hill Service Plaza in Fulton County, Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) officials saw an opportunity to create a community connection, support sustainability efforts, and provide a unique feature to Turnpike customers and the community. By leveraging partnerships with state agencies, local officials, and community groups, the PTC is constructing a new bicycle trailhead facility and other cycling amenities. The trailhead will serve as a new gateway to the Allegheny Mountains tourism and outdoor adventure area by accessing the 8.5-mile abandoned Turnpike roadway and tunnel system, which the PTC sold to the Bedford Fulton Joint Recreation Authority. The tunnels, which total nearly two miles in length, have become a popular attraction for bicyclists and pedestrians to explore and are expected to be an economic driver for the outdoor recreation economy.

*Speakers: Kelli Roberts, Director of Policy and External Affairs - Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission; Luke Larson, Engineer Project Manager, Environmental - Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission*

## **THURSDAY, MARCH 14**

**1:30 – 4:15 pm**

### **Connecting to Nature, Self & Community through Forest Bathing**

***~Note this session is 1:30 – 4:15 with an outdoor component, please dress appropriately to go outside.***

Join certified guides for a forest bathing walk. Forest therapy promotes healing and wellness through immersing oneself in the calming and restorative atmosphere of natural environments. The practice originated from the Japanese tradition of Shinrin-Yoku or "forest bathing", backed by research to provide an array of physical and mental health benefits. This slow, mindful experience consists of a series of invitations (suggested activities), with room for participants to craft the experience to support their own needs. We will cover tips for incorporating simple practices into daily life and how we are building partnerships to support wellness through forest bathing. Wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather for the slow-paced walk outdoors.

*Speakers: Kathryn Hunninen, Senior Manager of Special Initiatives - Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Patricia Himes, Naturalist Educator - Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy*

## **THURSDAY, MARCH 14**

**3:00 - 4:15 pm**

### **Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies Part 2: Starting your CAPRA Journey**

This second session in the two-part NRPA's Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) series is about how to get started on your CAPRA journey. We will cover what you need to know, how to garner community support, and how to best use resources to complete accreditation. Every agency's situation is different, what is your story and how can you make it better?

*Speakers: Monica Tierney CPRE, Director of Parks and Recreation - Lower Makefield Township; Lynn Todd, Operations Manager - Lower Makefield Township; Jennifer Schleining, CAPRA Accreditation Senior Manager - NRPA*

### **Public Parks are Green Infrastructure**

Attendees will hear from park designers on how the design of public parks can integrate forward-thinking approaches to green stormwater infrastructure, preservation of existing trees, increased tree canopy coverage, creation of habitat, and overall park design strategies that can work within maintenance constraints. This session will focus on the work that public parks can do in their role as essential green infrastructure. Applicable case studies will be reviewed, along with strategies to reduce up-front costs and minimize maintenance inputs.

*Speakers: Rosa Mannion, Principal Landscape Architect - NV5; Michael Connor, Director of Philadelphia Operations - NV5*

### **One Tree Per Child: Partnering, Planning, & Planting**

Through the One Tree Per Child program, Tree Pittsburgh engages with schools, community centers, scout troops, and other youth organizations to plant trees in parks, playgrounds, and urban green spaces. Tree Pittsburgh emphasizes the development of sustainable partnerships in order to support sustainably treed landscapes and educate about the many benefits of trees where people live, work, and play. This session will offer perspective on the One Tree Per Child approach to partnering, planning, and planting, with interactive participation.

*Speaker: Jonathan Fantazier, One Tree Per Child Program Manager - Tree Pittsburgh*

### **Emotional Warrior: Unwavering Resilience in a Broken World**

Attendees will learn core concepts on how we develop higher levels of resilience. Being resilient to the world's stressors and events is more critical than ever. Emotional Warrior is developed and facilitated by Chad Michael Bruckner. Chad grew up in Pennsylvania and experienced financial hardships as a child. He then served in policing and the military and endured much trauma and stress. Chad shares his lived experiences through the art of storytelling so that attendees will leave with an understanding in how to do to challenging things and come back from adversity. Chad shares his formula on how we attain higher levels of resilience. This experience is designed to serve as a catalyst for those already contemplating life change or becoming better versions of ourselves.

*Speaker: Chad Michael Bruckner, Founder/Motivational - Motivate Change*

### **Connecting Through Improv**

Anyone can do improvisational theatre, not just the comedians among us! Improv is a skill that boosts creativity, confidence, and listening and communication skills. In this interactive workshop, you will be gifted with activities you can use as team-builders, activities during camp, and even as an affordable standalone program that requires minimal supplies. Come ready to play – See you there!

*Speaker: Derek Muller, Public Information Officer - Montgomery Township*

## **FRIDAY, MARCH 15**

**9:30 - 10:45 am**

### **The National Study of Playgrounds**

The National Study of Playgrounds, a partnership between Studio Ludo, Kaiser Permanente, and the RAND Corporation, used direct observation to collect play behavior data on over 33,000 people in 60 playgrounds in 10 major US cities, in the summer of 2021. This session will present findings and best practices from the study, for the creation of play environments that attract all ages and support health and happiness through play.

*Speaker: Meghan Talarowski, Founder and Executive Director - studio ludo*

### **Programming Roundtable**

During this roundtable session, we will discuss many different topics in the Parks & Recreation field. Be prepared to share, help and listen to peers as we go over different topics and challenges we face on a daily basis. We will cover the below topics in a group discussion format:

- Programming
- Special Events
- Summer Camps
- Challenges
- Social Media

*Speakers: Matt Zipin, Program Coordinator - Newtown Township Parks & Recreation; Dan Sharapan, Director of Parks, Recreation & Open Space - Warwick Township*

### **Defining Maintenance Capacity**

Municipal and industry leaders alike are stewards of public infrastructure and therefore should be accountable to learn asset management best practices. Designed to reemphasize the value of robust municipal asset management and capital replacement planning, this session will outline strategies to help organizations audit their maintenance and operations functions, reducing deferred maintenance backlogs, and leading toward improved efficiencies and less resource waste.

*Speaker: BK Koehler, Director of The Maintenance Institute - PRPS*

### **Donors, Sponsors, and More!**

In this session, we'll talk about the nuanced differences between three types of funders: donors with philanthropic support, Sponsors and the mission-based support they provide to your organization, and others who may provide funding support but expect an itemized list of items in return. What do we call them? Sale contracts or marketing partners or just customers?

For the first half of this session, we'll talk about some definitions and distinctions, how you choose to define these categories in your own agency, how to create relationships with each category of people/businesses, and then spend time talking together and in groups about the way these different partners fit into the important operations of our agencies and societies.

1. Discuss and explore definitions for a variety of partnerships that are formed to provide financial support for our projects and agencies.
2. Consider how to create relationships that work in each of these different types of partnerships.
3. Explore together how each partnership and relationship has a role to play in the success of your programs and agencies.

*Speaker: Molly Hetrick, Director of Advancement - PRPS*

### **ADA Access 101 for Parks**

Do you need to know more? As a Park & Recreation professional can you be more prepared when working to develop and advance an "ADA Transition Plan" for your existing facilities? How about when you're preparing to develop new park facilities? Plan to learn and discuss the impacts of the current ADA Standards and ADA Guidelines. It is important to both understand and embrace what this means for real-world Park and Recreation development projects. This will include a targeted presentation by existing Design Consultants from across the Commonwealth, who have experience working on DCNR funded development projects. This will be interactive in nature as well, providing ample time for Q & A & Round table type discussions.

*Speaker: Ann Yost, RLA, President - YSM Landscape Architects; James Harshman, P.E., President - Harshman CE Group, LLC; Ashley Shultz, Project Manager - PA DCNR*

### **Seven Springs Facility Tour**

Details Pending

## **FRIDAY, MARCH 15**

**11:00 am - 12:15 pm**

### **Endnote: The "State of the State" of Outdoor Recreation is Pennsylvania**

Full session description to follow.

*Speakers: Panel Members TBD*

